

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 ACDA-19 MC-02 PRS-01

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FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 440

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T BAGHDAD 379

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, IR, UR

SUBJECT: IRAQI- SOVIET TIES

REF: TEHRAN 4475

1. FOLLOWING ARE UNINT'S COMMENTS ON ITEMS LISTED IN PARA ONE OF REFTEL. (A) ONLY AGREEMENT WE ARE AWARE OF RE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR WAS CONCLUDED WITH TT AASLOVAKIA IN DECEMBER 1972 (BAGHDAD 81). AS MENTIONED AT TIME, IT WAS BELIEVED IRAQIS WANTED TO PROFIT FROM COMMUNIST EXPERIENCE IN THIS AREA, PARTICULARLY TECHNICAL SECURITY ITEMS. (B) USINT NOT AWARE OF SPECIFIC TRADE UNION CONFERENCE, BUT IRAQI TRADE UNIONS LIKE ALL OTHER PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING COMMUNIST PARTY, ARE EITHER DIRECTLY CONTROLLED BY BAATH OR CLOSELY WATCHED BY THEM. (C) 1,000 FIGURE FOR SOVIET TECHNICIANS IS AS GOOD A GUESS AS ANY. (D) COMMUNISTS HAVE IN EFFECT ACCEPTED BAATH DOMINATED NATIONAL FRONT FOR OVER A YEAR AND THEY HAVE TWO FIGUREHEAD MINISTERS IN CABINET. ADDITIONAL AGREEMENT MAY HAVE BEEN REACHED, BUT THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN BAATH IS GOING TO PERMIT ICP ANY MORE FREEDOM OF ACTION. (E) ITALIANS AND FRENCH BOTH HAVE HEARD REPORT THAT IRAQ WILL RECEIVE UP TO ONE SQUADRON OF TU-22 OR SOME TYPE SOVIET BOMBER. FACT

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REMAINS THAT IRAQI MILITARY FORCES ARE NOT MATCH FOR THOSE OF IRAN.

2. COMMENT: THERE IS SOMETHING OF SELF- FULFILLING PROPHECY TO SHAH' S ANALYSIS THAT IRAQ COULD BECOME SOVIET SATELITE. IF IRAN RESISTS IRAQI OVERTURES FOR DETENTE, CONTINUES TO GIVE

MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO KURDS, MAINTAINS UNCOMPROMISING POSITION ON SHATT AL- ARAB, AND INTENSIFIED ANTI- IRAQI PROPAGANDA, BAATH REGIME WILL CONTINUE TO STRIKE OUT AGAINST IRAN THROUGH SUBVERSION AND PROPAGANDA AND CONTINUE TO RELY ON USSR FOR ARMS AND PROTECTION. OTHER COURSE OPEN TO IRAN IS TO MEET IRAQI OVERTURES HALFWAY OR -- AS STRONGER POWER -- SLIGHTLY MORE THAN HALFWAY IN ORDER TO TEST IRAQI SERIOUSNESS ABOUT DETENTE.

3. ANALYSIS OF BEST INFORMED AMBASSADORS -- ALGERIAN, EGYPTIAN, FRENCH, AND TURKISH -- IS REMARKABLY SIMILAR. IT GOES AS FOLLOWS: BAATH REGIME HAS TRIED AND FAILED TO CRUSH KURDISH MOVEMENT. IT DOES NOT WANT A RENEWAL OF WIDESCALE FIGHTING. IT HAS RECOGNIZED IT HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO GIVE KURDS CERTAIN RIGHTS AND SEMI- AUTONOMY. OFFER FALLS SHORT OF WHAT KURDS WANT, BUT IT GOES WELL BEYOND WHAT ANY PREVIOUS BAGHDAD GOVERNMENT OFFERED KURDS. FURTHERMORE, NO SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENT COULD OFFER MUCH MORE WITHOUT GRANTING INDEPENDENCE. KURDISH RESISTANCE TO COMPROMISE WITH BAATH WOULD END IF IRAN STOPPED ITS ASSISTANCE. DETENTE WITH IRAN IS THUS NECESSARY TO CONSOLIDATE BAATH POWER.

4. I HOPE THAT IN RESPONDING TO SHAH' S REQUEST FOR INFO ON RECENT SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN IRAQ, DEPARTMENT WILL CITE EXTENT TO WHICH IRAQ NOW TURNING TO WEST FOR NEW ECONOMIC PROJECTS; REVIVAL OF RELATIONS WITH CHINA; AND IF POSSIBLE, RECENT IRAQI REQUESTS TO UK AND SPAIN WHICH INDICATE INTEREST IN LESSENING SOVIET INFLUENCE EVEN IN MILITARY SPHERE. LOWRIE

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